A SULTAN'S SEVEN BEDS.

Abdul Hamid, In Fear of His Life, Changed His Sleeping Place Every Night.

An interesting reminiscence of Abdul Hamid, the former sultan of Turkey, who was known as Abdul the Accursed and by several other more or less unpleasant titles, is given in the description of a visit to Yildiz Kiosk by Colonel (Count) Gleichen in the Household Brigade Magazine.

"The house was a perfect labyrinth of small rooms," he writes. "In no fewer than seven of these rooms were beds on which the sultan used to sleep—not ordinary beds, but large couches, sloping at a considerable angle from the head end downward, so that, covered with a quilt or two, his majesty could sleep in a semi-upright condition and spring up at a moment's notice to be ready for anything.

"No one knew in which of the seven rooms the sultan was going to sleep, for he changed his resting place every night for fear of hidden dangers. Along the main passage which led past many of these rooms a most ingenious arrangement existed for giving warning of the approach of any one. The floor was composed of loose planks under the carpet, so that merely to walk along it started a clanking sound which must invariably have waked a light and nervous sleeper."

OYSTER ISLANDS.

Their Growth Is Exactly Analogous to That of Coral Reefs.

Oyster islands similar to those formed of coral are found in several parts of the world. The islands in Newport river and Beaufort harbor, North Carolina, says a writer in the Century Path Magazine, have been discovered to have as base a reef to which the spawn were attached and above this layer upon layer of oysters, vegetable growth and debris brought by the action of the waves and winds, all of which finally grows high enough to rise above the surface of the water. This growth is exactly analogous to that of the coral islands of the Pacific.

The islands near the mouth of the river Tagus, in Portugal, are said to have been built up in this way also. Here, where there is such a quantity of oysters that 100,000,000 a year would scarcely be missed if they were removed, the expanse of water just beyond the river's mouth is dotted with oyster islands. As in the case of the coral reefs, which on the seaward side may be covered with living, growing coral, live oysters thrive in the same waters where the accumulation of dead generations has served to form the islands.

Muscles May Move Themselves.

Albert von Haller, a Swiss surgeon of the eighteenth century, was the first to point out that the muscles of our bodies have an automatic action. Before Haller's time it was believed that the muscles could not contract or swell up of themselves, but were drawn up by the nerves of volition. Haller discovered that this is not so, but that a muscle, if irritated, will draw itself together automatically, even when it is quite separated from the nerves, and this has since been proved to be true by a great number of experiments. So that, though it is true our nerves are the cause of our moving, because they excite the muscles and so cause them to contact, yet the real power of contraction is in the muscle itself. The body of man is full of wonders, not the least of which is this automatic power of contraction in all muscles. — Louisville Courier-Journal.

The Comma.

The point on which most writers are at odds with the compositor is the comma. He is too fond of this particular punctuation point. He takes a delight in breaking up the flow of a sentence with his artificial pauses. We all say, "Why then did you do it?" in one breath. It is the compositor who says, "Why, then, did you do it?" It is possible to be too hard on the comma. It has its undeniable uses. Edward Clodd in his memoir of Grant Allen tells the story of a compositor who dissented very strongly from that writer's moral philosophy and had to "set up" an interview with Allen in which the sentence occurred, "He is happily married." He salved his conscience by printing it "He is, happily, married."—London Chronicle.

A Cheerful Liar.

One time the late ameer of Afghanistan asked the English diplomatic agent at his court to give a description amid a circle of Afghan boys of the largest gun in England. The Englishman described the 100 ton gun, and when he had finished the ameer observed to his admiring subjects, "I have seen a gun the cartridge of which was as large as the gun which has just been described to you." It would never do for an ameer to be astonished, much less to confess himself beaten.

One Idea Developed.

Browning—How is your new club for the exchange and development of ideas getting along, old man? Greening—Not as rapidly as we had expected. So far it has developed the idea in each member that he is the only man in the bunch who has any ideas worth while.—Chicago News.

The Whole Period.

"There is a period in a woman's life when she thinks of nothing but dress."

"What period is that?"

"From the cradle to the grave."—Puck.

If the thief lacks opportunity he thinks himself honest.—Sterne.

MACARONI DANDIES.

Grotesque Fashions In England In the Eighteenth Century.

Dandyism developed a new phase of quiet richness during early Georgian times, and the court exquisites were stately figures in finely laced shirts, long skirted coats and gold clocked stockings. The hats worn by the beau were modified reproductions of those in fashion at Versailles, and the art of wearing them was shown in the tilt. In fact, different angles in the tilt identified the wearer's status and locality.

In 1772 dandyism became again paramount. A band of young bloods returned from an extended tour abroad, and while in Italy they had contrived to get several new ideas about dress into their somewhat empty heads.

Fired with an ever growing sense of their own importance as arbiters of fashion, they formed themselves into a group known as the Macaroni club, in contradistinction to the good old fashioned Beefsteak club of London.

The Macaronies dressed their hair in enormous side curls, with a hideous knocker-like twist at the back. With this exaggerated coiffure a tiny hat was worn, which it was correct for the wearer to raise with his tasseled cane.

A soft white handkerchief was tied in a huge bow under the Macaroni's chin. His coat was short, and his tight knee breeches were made of striped or flowered silk. Thus garbed, with innumerable dangling seals, two watches at least, silk stockings and diamond buckled shoes, the dandy walked abroad, eminently satisfied with himself and quite convinced that his appearance was greatly envied.—"Beau Brummel and His Times."

Pretty Heavy Umbrellas.

The great objection to umbrellas 100 years ago was their weight, and when it is stated as a matter of fact that the very smallest umbrella then weighed no less than three and a half pounds it will probably be admitted that the objection was a justifiable one. Instead of the thin rainproof fabrics which now form the covering of umbrellas nothing better was known than leather or oilcloth. The ribs were of wood or whalebone, and such a thing as a steel rod was, of course, unknown. The stick was usually of heavy oak. In those days, too, many umbrellas had the additional incumbrance of feathers over the top on the theory of "shedding water off a duck's back." But the oilcloth and leather umbrellas, notwithstanding the feathers, were apt to leak.

Fifty-one years ago Sunday Jefferson Davis was inaugurated president of the Confederate States of America, at Montgomery, Ala.